

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 PER-01 SP-02 MMO-01 /040 W

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R 060827Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3739

INFO AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

R O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 0021

FOR IO MR. LEWIS FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UN, PFOR, APER

SUBJECT: US MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY APPLIED TO ARAB BLOC

REF: STATE 303856

1. SUMMARY. WE WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORT MOVES TO STRENGTHEN US MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY BUT HAVE SOME COMMENTS ABOUT OUR STRATEGY IN APPLYING THIS TO ARAB STATES IF WE WANT TO SUCCEED IN OUR OBJECTIVES. END SUMMARY.

2. MOVES IN THE DEPARTMENT TO GIVE INCREASING EMPHASIS TO MULTI-LATERAL DIPLOMACY ARE WELCOME AND WILL BE FULLY SUPPORTED AT THIS MISSION. IT HAS ALWAYS SEEMED EVIDENT TO ME THAT THE WAY DEPARTMENT IS CONSTITUTED THERE IS (PERHAPS INEVITABLY) HEAVY INSTITUTIONAL BIAS TOWARD BILATERALISM IN MANAGEMENT OF OUR FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THIS REQUIRES SPECIAL ACTION TO REDRESS BALANCE TOWARD FITTING OUR BI  
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LATERAL PROBLEMS INTO SOME KIND OF GLOBAL POLICY ARCHITECTURE. WE PARTICULARLY WELCOME PROSPECT OF INCREASED FLOW OF INFORMATION FROM DEPARTMENT AND BELIEVE THIS WILL BE ASSET IN EFFORT TO GET UAEG TO SUPPORT OUR OBJECTIVES.

3. AT SAME TIME, I BELIEVE NEW OFFICE THAT YOU ARE SETTING UP UNDER SECRETARY'S DIRECTION SHOULD BE ALERT TO CERTAIN PROSPECTS THAT WILL ARISE IN APPLICATION OF "MULTILATERALISM" IN ARAB WORLD. FOR SMALL ARAB STATE LIKE UAE, ARAB CAUCUS IS SINGLE MOST POWERFUL FORCE IN DETERMINING VOTES AT UN. THIS PUTS SHARP LIMITATION IN THEIR OWN EYES ON THEIR FREEDOM OF ACTION IN VOTING. IN DETERMINING OUR STRATEGY TOWARD NUMERICALLY IMPORTANT ARAB BLOC, THEREFORE, IT WILL BE POINTLESS TO THINK IN TERMS OF BRINGING PRESURES TO BEAR ON SMALLER STATES IF WE ARE UNSUCCESSFUL IN CHANGING CURRENTLY NEGATIVE STANCE OF KEY ARAB STATES. TO DO SO WILL BE QUIXOTIC EXERCISE FOR USIHN PUTTING STRAIN ON LIBATERAL RELATIONS TO OUR OWN DISADVANTAGE WITHOUT PROSPECT OF PRACTICAL RESULTS IN TERMS OF OUR MULTILATERAL OBJECTIVES. YET TEMPTATION TO DO PRECISELY THIS WILL BE STRONG. IN SEVERAL ARAB COUNTRIES WHOSE POSITIONS ARE ALWAYS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT HERE--SYRIA, ALGERIA--WE HAVE VERY LIMITED LEVERAGE AND IN ANY CASE PROSPECT OF BRINGING ABOUT CHANGE OF VOTING PATTERN IS REMOTE. IN OTHERS THAT ALSO COUNT HERE--EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA--THERE WILL ALWAYS BE POWERFUL REASONS (PARTICULARLY WITH FORMER) NOT TO ROCK THE BOAT BECAUSE OF OVERRIDING ARAB-ISRAEL OBJECTIVE. IT IS LIKELY TO END UP BEING ONLY THE UAE'S (I.E. THE SMALLER STATES) WHERE (A) A FRIENDLY RECEPTION AND (B) NO SUCH OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS WILL LEAD THE DEPARTMENT TO CONCLUDE THAT THIS IS INDEED THE VENUE FOR A DISPLAY OF OUR MUSCLE.

4. IF WE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT TURNING VOTING PATTERNS AROUND AMONG ARAB STATES, WE WILL NEED TO MAKE THIS AN ISSUE WITH THE BIG GUNS AS WELL AS THE SMALL, AND TO DEMONSTRATE THERE IS PRICE TO BE PAID BY THOSE GOVERNMENTS IF OUR APPROACHES ARE IGNORED. IN THIS RESPECT WE SUGGEST CONCENTRATING ON TWO COUNTRIES--EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA. SAUDIS VOTE RIGHT ON MANY (NOT ALL) ISSUES BUT THEIR DIPLOMACY IS SO INERT THAT THEIR POSITION OF SUPPORT FOR OUR POLICIES DOES NOT COUNT FOR AS MUCH AS IT COULD. FOR PAST SEVERAL YEARS SAUDIS HAVE DIDDLED US WITH PROMISES WHICH NEVER MATERIALIZE

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OF WEIGHING IN AMONG SMALLER GULF STATES MAJOR EFFORT MIGHT BE MADE DURING COMING MONTHS TO ENGAGE SAG AT HIGHEST LEVELS TO PERSUADE THEM OF OUR COMMON INTEREST IN NOT LETTING RADICALS DOMINATE UN TO DETRIMENT OF WESTERN POSITION IN WORLD, AND THEREFORE OF NEED FOR MORE DETERMINED DIPLOMATIC EFFORT BY SAUDIS IN CAPITALS WHERE THEY HAVE INFLUENCE.

5. ANY SHIFT IN EGYPT'S POSITION WOULD ALSO HAVE IMPORTANT EFFECT

HERE. AS LONG AS EGYPT IS SEEN TO JOIN ALGERIA, SYRIA, IRAQ IN A CONSISTENT NEGATIVE VOTING PATTERN AGAINST ISSUES WE CONSIDER IMPORTANT, IT WILL BE HEAVY UPHILL BATTLE TO PERSUADE UAE AND OTHER SMALL ARAB STATES TO VOTE IN OPPOSITE DIRECTION. IN OUR DISCUSSIONS ABOUT KOREA THIS PAST YEAR QUESTION WAS SOMETIMES ASKED EXPLICITLY AND WAS OFTEN IMPLICIT AS TO WHY, IN LIGHT OF TREMENDOUS IMPROVMENT THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE IN US-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS, EGYPT IS STILL VOTING WITH SUCH CASUAL DISREGARD FOR US INTERESTS. OFFICIALS HERE SENSE VERY QUICKLY WHEN PUNCHES ARE BEING PULLED IN OTHER ARAB CAPITALS, AND IF THEY BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING THEY WILL TREAT OUR DEMARCHES HERE EQUALLY AS MERE FORMALITY.

6. FINALLY, A WORD ABOUT LEVERAGE, REAL AND IMAGINED. BOTH REFTEL AND SOME OF MESSAGES ON KOREA SPOKE WARNINGLY OF DAMAGE THAT COULD ENSUE TO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS IF STATES WE APPROACH REMAIN NEGLIGENT OF OUR INTERESTS. BEFORE OUR AMBASSADORS BANDY SUCH THREATS ABOUT, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS TO ME IMPORTANT TO BE CLEAR IN OUR MINDS AS TO WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT. DO WE HAVE IN MIND CUTTING OFF U.S. OIL TECHNOLOGY HERE? THE ROWANS AND PENRODS WHO ARE ENJOYING LUCRATIVE CONTACTS MIGHT BE UPSET TO HEAR IT. DO WE INTEND TO DENY THE GULF STATES THE RIGHT TO BUY US TREASURY ISSUES? THEY CLEARLY WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE FINDING OTHER INVESTMENT OUTLETS. PERHAPS WE ARE UNIMAGINATIVE, BUT WE DO NOT SEE ANYTHING THE US CAN DO IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE UAE THAT DOES NOT HARM OUR OWN INTERESTS MORE THAN IT DOES THEIRS. SUCH THREATS ARE ESSENTIALLY EMPTY, AND OUR REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD NOT USE THEM OR EVEN ADUMBRATE THEM WHEN WE KNOW WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO CARRY THROUGH.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLICIES, RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 06 JAN 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** greeneet  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Office:** ACTION IO  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Reference:** 76 STATE 303856  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** greeneet  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 13 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <13 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2004 by greeneet>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** US MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY APPLIED TO ARAB BLOC  
**TAGS:** PFOR, APER, XF, UN  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006